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Car Distribution

And the

BORDEN GOVERNMENT ACTION

Published by the Central Information Office of the Canadian Liberal Party
PUBLICATION No. 33

F5012 [1915?] L695C

CAR DISTRIBUTION

And the Government Action in Connection Therewith.

What the Farmers Got From the Liberals.

The farmers of Western Canada struggled long before they succeeded in obtaining the enactment of a law which gave all parties, whether elevator companies, large farmers or small farmers, an equal right in Car Distribution. The provision was fought long and earnestly not only by the elevator companies, but also by the railway companies, on the ground that it was necessary in order to relieve congestion and facilitate the dispatch of grain, that all grain should be shipped through elevators and that elevator companies should be given a preference in the matter of Car Distribution. The farmers, however, felt that their safety depended on having equal rights in the matter of Car Distribution and on being allowed to ship anyway they liked, either through elevators or from loading platforms.

What Happened After 1911?

After a fight, they succeeded, but as soon as the present government came into office, they made an immediate attempt to take away that right from the farmers. Their new grain act provided as follows in section 207: "The Board may in its discretion, order cars to be supplied contrary to provisions on this part." This sweeping enact-

ment apparently was not intended to cover all cases, and sub-sections A, B, C and D provided for such action by the Board under circumstances that were not considered particularly objectionable, but to these was added clause "E" which provided that the Board might so order: "Whenever, after due consideration the Board considers it necessary advisable, in order to relieve congestion and facilitate the dispatch of grain."

Farmers' Rights Sacrificed.

This provision was intended to take away the farmers' rights in the matter of Car Distribution, for the main grounds on which elevator and railway companies insisted on doing away with the former car distribution provisions was that doing so would "relieve congestion and facilitate the dispatch of grain." These companies would at all times be in close touch with the Board, and in case of any blocade would probably have little difficulty in convincing the Board that it should act in their favour.

The Liberals Took a Hand.

It was felt by the Opposition in the House of Commons, especially by those from the West, that such enactment would work serious injury to the farmers and this clause was fought from beginning to end in the House of Commons, and when the bill came up for third reading an amendment was moved by Mr. Cruise of Dauphin, asking to have clause "E" of section 207 struck

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out, but the Government and their supporters voted down the amendment of Mr. Cruise. The record of this vote will be found on page 4792 of Hansard 1912.

The Senate Saved the Situation for the Farmers.

Fortunately, however, this act had to be passed by the Senate before it became law and the Senators felt that the government's proposal was so iniquitous that they struck out the clause in question and so saved to the farmers of the West their rights. The record of this action of the Senate will be found in the Senate Hansard of that year, page 848.